



Planning Commission Report

To: City Council

From: Planning Commission

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Date: July 29, 2020

Title: Amendments to Comprehensive Plan and PARCC Plan Trails Map

Project File Number LAND-2020-00147 and SEPA-2020-00148

Recommended Action: Adopt the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and Trails Map in the PARCC Plan as shown in Attachment A.

Summary: This amendment package represents four Comprehensive Plan that were on the 2018-19 Comprehensive Plan amendment docket. The items amend existing policies and add new policies to the following Comprehensive Plan elements: Goals, Vision and Framework; Community Character; Economic Vitality; Neighborhoods; Capital Facilities; Land Use; Parks; Natural Environment; and Utilities.

Each policy amendment provides guidance for outcomes reflected from recently adopted plans:

- *2019 Parks American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan*
- *2019 Tree Canopy Strategic Plan Update*
- *2019 Facilities Strategic Management Plan*

In addition, there are proposed revisions to the trails map in the PARCC Plan.

- Reasons the recommendation should be adopted:** This amendment package should be adopted for the following reasons:
- The amendments would provide policy guidance for outcomes reflected in the three recently adopted plans listed above.
 - The adoption of the policies and the trails map update would ensure that Redmond’s Comprehensive Plan is not only consistent with recently adopted planning documents but will also continue to support the vision for how and where Redmond grows, recreates, invests, and protects its natural environment.
 - An updated Trails Map would guide decisions regarding future infrastructure investments.

Recommended Findings of Fact

1. Public Hearing and Notice

a. Public Hearing Date

The Planning Commission opened the public hearing on July 8, 2020 and closed it on July 22, 2020.

b. Notice

The public hearing notice was published in the Eastside edition of the *Seattle Times* on June 17, 2020. Public notices were posted in City Hall. All members of the Parks and Trails Commission received notice. Notice was also provided by announcing the hearing in the Planning Commission agendas and extended agendas, as well as postings on the City’s web site.

2. Public Comment

The meeting minutes for the July 8, 2020, and July 22, 2020 public hearing dates, are shown in Attachment B. Testimony was provided only at the July 3, 2020 hearing. Three written comments were submitted into the public record and are shown in Attachment C. A summary of the testimony and written comments are described below under the Key Issues section.

Recommended Conclusions

1. Key Issues Discussed by the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission began discussion of this topic on April 8, 2020 and considered several issues regarding the proposed amendments. Key issues presented at the public hearings and discussed by the Planning Commission are summarized below. Attachment D includes the Planning Commission’s issues matrix.

Commission Discussion

In reviewing the proposed amendments related to the *Facilities Strategic Management Plan*, the Commissioners discussed several issues such as:

- The approach used in the Plan to prevent circumstances that could, for example, force the closure of a city facility;
- The “benchmarks” that trigger maintenance activity, and the use of life-cycle analysis for city facilities;
- The meaning and application of one of the Plan’s guiding principles to create “sustainable and efficient” buildings; and

In reviewing the proposed amendments related to the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan*, the Commissioners inquired about whether defensible placement of trees is addressed in the Plan. Staff shared that although specific location considerations are not part of the Plan, the Plan does reference the “right tree in the right place” that requests private landowners and developers research the location and tree characteristics to ensure that utilities, structures, sight triangles and safety are addressed when choosing the right tree.

The Planning Commission discussed the Technical Committee’s recommendation to delete policy NE-113, *Maintain no net loss of significant trees within the city over the long term*, and decided that this policy forms the basis of the tree regulation code and should be retained.

Several discussion topics introduced by Commissioners were more relevant to the Tree Code Update which is currently underway. These items are listed on the attached Issues Matrix and have been referred for consideration to the Tree Code Update Project, led by Project Manager Cathy Beam, Principle Planner.

Public Testimony and Written Comments:

Although testimony is fully captured in the July 8th Meeting Minutes, both testimony and written comments are briefly summarized below:

- Shelly Bowman, Redmond resident. Ms. Bowman stated that she supports the proposed amendments that relate to the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan*. Ms. Bowman requested that the Planning Commission revise the Redmond Zoning Code tree permit provisions to

ensure the City meets the 40% tree canopy goal, as stated in the Strategic Plan, in 2050. Ms. Bowman submitted written testimony as well, that includes fourteen measures to attain this goal. (Attachment C)

- Tom Hinman, Redmond resident. Mr. Hinman provided two written comments and public testimony to inform decision makers involved in implementing the 40% tree canopy retention strategy. Mr. Hinman acknowledged some of the positive steps taken by City staff but stressed that more emphasis, evaluation, research, and ultimately tree code updates are needed in the areas of: tree definitions; regulatory exceptions generally; and the criteria used for exceptions; mitigation enforcement; replacement tree fees; and survival monitoring. In addition, Mr. Hinman recommends a stakeholder team that includes members of the public be established and perhaps modeled after the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree Board. Mr. Hinman supported retaining NE-113, “maintain no net loss of significant trees over the long term” and suggested a period of 10 years.

- Rosemarie Ives, Redmond resident. Ms. Ives testified and provided written comment on the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan*. Ms. Ives applauded the goals of the plan but believes a much stronger emphasis should be placed on retention vs. planting. In addition, Ms. Ives stresses the plan should focus on the urban centers and contiguous city limits and not include canopy from outside those limits. In conclusion Ms. Ives stated that the plan should prioritize preserving and protecting existing trees in urban centers.

- Gary Smith, Redmond resident. Mr. Smith applauded the City’s effort to establish a sustainable urban forest. Mr. Smith stated that Strategy D in the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan* needs to be emphasized and this preserves existing canopy. Mr. Smith provided an example of the Greystone development and its impacts on tree canopy over time and urged the Commission to look at other city’s efforts including Kirkland.

- James Terwilliger, Redmond resident. Mr. Terwilliger stated that ways to address Tree Canopy are both simple and urgent. Mr. Terwilliger stated that the current canopy is lower than the City’s goal and decreasing. Mr. Terwilliger stated the City should consider removing the fee-in-lieu and require new trees to be planted, before existing trees can be removed. Mr. Terwilliger stated leadership was needed and he believed Redmond could be that leader.

2. Recommended Conclusions of the Technical Committee

The recommended conclusions contained in the Technical Committee Report (Attachment E) regarding the proposed amendments and trails map revisions are adopted in support of the Planning Commission’s recommendation with one exception which is to retain policy NE-113 *Maintain no net loss of significant trees within the city over the long term.*

3. Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission voted 7-0 at its July 22, 2020 meeting to recommend adoption of the Technical Committee recommended amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and the PARCC Plan trails map with the sole exception to retain policy NE-113.

List of Attachments

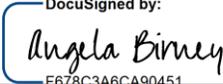
- Attachment A: [Recommended Amendments](#)
- Attachment B: [Planning Commission Meeting Summary April 8, 2020](#)
[Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, July 8, 2020](#)
[Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, July 22, 2020](#)
- Attachment C: Written Comments from:
[Shelly Bowman, Redmond resident](#)
[Tom Hinman, Redmond resident \(2 comments\)](#)
[Rosemarie Ives](#)
- Attachment D: [Final Issues Matrix](#)
- Attachment E: [Technical Committee Report, including exhibits](#)

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Carol Helland, Planning Director	Date
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Roy Captain, Planning Commission Chairperson	Date
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Angela Birney, Mayor	Date
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